



Iowa Outdoors

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
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EARLY PHEASANT NESTING INDICATORS LOOK PROMISING

DES MOINES - Iowa pheasant hunters could have something to look forward to this fall and winter as early indicators have shown favorable nesting results and survival so far this spring.

The news comes on the heels of a year when Iowa's pheasant population declined an estimated 34 percent.

“Last year's numbers declined because a snowy winter reduced hen survival, and very heavy rains late in May of 2004 also reduced nesting success,” said Todd Bogenschutz, DNR upland wildlife biologist. “Last June our weather models predicted the decline, and the August roadside surveys and hunter reports confirmed it.”

This past winter and spring offer a bit more optimism than last year, said Bogenschutz.

“Our pheasant population typically shows increases following mild winters (Dec.-March) with springs (April-May) that are dryer and warmer than normal,” he said. “This past winter was very mild, as the statewide average snowfall was only 18.1 inches, 28 percent below the 1961-90 normal. Statewide April-May precipitation averaged 7.35 inches, only slightly above the norm, while the mean temperature over the same period was 56 degrees, or 1 degree above normal.

Perhaps the best news for pheasant hunters this fall is the mild winter Iowa experienced this past year. According to the state's climatologist, in 118 years of records, only 13 winters had less snowfall than this past winter. Mild winters lead to high hen survival, said Bogenschutz, and more hens laying eggs equals more chicks, which in turn means more roosters this fall.

Spring nesting conditions initially were very favorable as April was normal for rainfall, but much warmer than average. Statewide, temperatures cooled off a bit in May, and NW, NC, WC, and Central regions of Iowa reported monthly rainfall totals 1 to 3 inches above normal. However, rainfall in the eastern third of Iowa was on average 2 inches below normal. Localized heavy rains were reported in Dickinson, Emmet, Kossuth, Adair, Madison, Dallas, and Guthrie counties in May. These areas may see a poorer nesting effort as flooding may have destroyed some nests, said Bogenschutz. A number of wildlife staff reported seeing their first pheasant broods around the week of May 15, which is early, said Bogenschutz. Indications are the warm April encouraged early nesting, and early hatches are usually a sign of a good nesting season.

However, Bogenschutz cautioned hunters Iowa pheasants are not out of the woods yet. Continued dry conditions during the early summer are crucial to overall nesting success.

Based on the weather data, population models predict Iowa's pheasant numbers will be higher in 2005 than in 2004. Bogenschutz noted that predictions based on weather data are correct about 80 percent of the time and over the last four years the models have been correct. Bogenschutz says the DNR's August roadside survey is the best gauge of what upland populations will be this fall. The DNR will post its August roadside numbers on the DNR webpage www.iowadnr.com around Sept. 15. Those with e-mail can sign-up on the DNR's website to receive roadside survey results once they are completed.

###

ADULT SUPERVISION STRESSED DURING SUMMER RECREATIONAL SEASON

DES MOINES – Warmer days and rising water temperatures are driving Iowans to the lakes, streams and beaches in high numbers, prompting DNR officers to remind to Iowans to be safe and careful when pursuing their favorite summer activities.

One of the key messages DNR officers are stressing is the importance of proper, constant adult supervision when playing in and around water.

“Whether it’s a lake, pond, stream or even a swimming pool, parents and guardians must stay vigilant at watching out for the younger family members,” said Rod Slings, recreational safety coordinator for the DNR. “The same holds true for those with marginal swimming skills, and even accomplished adult swimmers, but even more so with these younger kids.

“These are often highly-active, high-energy, highly-exploratory kids who, in some cases, haven’t developed many of the fears or older kids and adults already have. When that’s the case taking your eye off your child even for an instant could turn into a tragedy.”

The need for constant supervision is even higher when visiting waters for the first time due to the unfamiliarity factor, Slings said.

“In some cases, certain water bodies may have variable currents, varying depths, differing bottom structure, changing water clarity, floating debris and other obstacles that could pose a threat to safety,” he said. “An example is what we refer to as a “strainer,”

such as flotsam or other logjams along a river or stream that allows water to flow through, but may otherwise drag a water vessel or even a person under where they become trapped. It's important to learn the dynamics of that water body beforehand to avoid such pitfalls."

Of course, safety officials are strongly encouraging the use of approved personal flotation devices whenever around water, especially for young children and less experienced swimmers.

"You don't know how many times we and other law enforcement officers, during the course of a drowning or near-drowning investigation, heard, 'I just turned away for a second to...',” Slings said. "It's that one second that could change a life forever."

###

WILDLIFE BABIES

By Joe Wilkinson

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

With Wednesday's blustery winds, Cynthia Clabough was expecting company.

"After the storm a few days ago, I ended with — let's see — eight birds out of that one," counted Clabough, a licensed wildlife rehabilitator. From her home along the Wapsipinicon River in Linn County, she raises a variety of orphaned, abandoned and injured wildlife.

Most of the 30 or so licensed rehabilitators in Iowa, and their helpers, go *way* beyond the call of duty to get that sick or abandoned raccoon, fawn or bird back into the wild. But they are not exactly looking for more business. They would be much less busy if people would follow one simple rule: **LEAVE IT ALONE.**

"I'm getting all kinds of calls from people who have 'found' wildlife babies," acknowledges Department of Natural Resources wildlife biologist Tim Thompson. "It's the time of year when wildlife populations are at their highest. In almost all cases, I ask them to leave it alone. Just because they 'find' it, doesn't mean it is lost or abandoned."

In most cases, the parent is nearby; it's instinct for survival keeping it out of reach of the human predator it perceives. When that well-meaning Good Samaritan walks off with its baby, neither the baby nor the natural world are being done any favor.

"A doe, for instance, hides its fawn and goes off to feed," explains Thompson. "The fawn has no scent when first born. The mother protects it from predators by staying away, until it returns to feed it." By carrying a wildlife baby home, you've most likely shortened its life or chances of growing up wild. And by growing up wild, it has a better chance of avoiding predators — including us — as it matures.

If it is truly orphaned or abandoned, your first call should be to a conservation officer. He or she can locate the nearest rehabilitator; licensed wildlife care-givers who raise the animal as close to the wild as practical. And the end result is to return it to the wild. A self-professed nature lover, Clabough admits it seems like a losing battle.

"I see the environment progressively getting worse. Urban sprawl sickens me. To see (people) chopping up what little habitat we have left. If I can release a handful of healthy species each year; it maybe gets a healthy strain of animals out there," admits the homespun philosopher.

She has several others who help her; one takes only raccoons; and just a litter or two a year. But even that helps. That same person comes over to critter-sit if Clabough wants to leave for a weekend, for instance. And as the saying goes, “it’s hard to get good help.” Burnout is one factor. Many baby birds need to be fed every 20 or 30 minutes. Expense is another reason there are not more rehabbers. While some stores offer discounts on food needed by wildlife babies, rehabilitators primarily pay out of their own pockets. They’re perhaps the most dedicated conservation volunteers out there.

At our place, a two-day old fawn was the center of attention on Memorial Day, for the half hour I had to wait before meeting Clabough to hand him over. Its mother had been killed by a car the night before, near Lake Macbride State Park. With its high rigged rear legs, it cautiously hopped around the empty dog kennel; bleating. Easy to see why someone might try to take matters into their own hands. On the other hand, I couldn’t even get it to take a few drops of water from a baby bottle. Easy to see it would not last long in inexperienced hands. A few hours later, another call came; “fawn in the yard; what should I do? “Leave it alone; call back if it was there in the morning,” I suggested. The call never came.

The moral to the story? If that wildlife baby is truly orphaned, contact a conservation professional. If it’s just *there*, and *there* looks fairly safe, leave it alone. The wild species out there have been doing pretty well despite us for 10,000 years. They can probably stumble through a while longer.

###

DNR TO SEEK LISTING MOUNTAIN LION AS “FURBEARER”

By Joe Wilkinson

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

DES MOINES - The Department of Natural Resources will seek “furbearer” status for mountain lions, in the wake of recent appearances of the big cat in Iowa over the last few years.

The state’s Natural Resources Commission has instructed staff of the DNR to pursue approval in the Iowa Legislature for the classification; which would allow the agency to establish regulations such as a season and limits on killing mountain lions. The same status will be sought for black bears.

Three of the big cats have been killed in the last three years in Iowa. Several others have been confirmed by tracks. Another was photographed by a motion-sensitive trail camera. A variety of unconfirmed sightings have been fielded by DNR officials as well. The re-emergence of the mountain lion, or cougar, prompted a petition to place the animal on the state’s endangered species list. At the NRC’s June meeting in Storm Lake, the petition was reviewed, but commissioners were told that there was little public support for “endangered list” status. “We must look at what realistically might happen, to get some protection for mountain lions. A more positive approach is to get them back on the ‘furbearer’ list”, emphasized DNR wildlife research supervisor Terry Little.

DNR wildlife staff will work with conservation and agriculture advocates in the coming months to come up with acceptable wording. A key area will be to eliminate indiscriminate killing of the wild cats, yet allowing landowners to protect themselves, their family, property, pets and livestock if threatened.

###

DNR CONDUCTING CLEAR LAKE DOCK INVENTORY; RULE CHANGES TO TAKE EFFECT NEXT SUMMER

By Lowell Washburn

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

CLEAR LAKE --- Beginning next week, DNR waters officers will be conducting an inspection and inventory of all docks installed in Clear Lake.

According to DNR conservation officer Randy Schnoebelen, there are roughly 1,100 docks currently registered on Clear Lake. The lakewide inventory is being staged in anticipation of statewide rule changes scheduled to take effect next summer.

"What we'll be doing is looking at things like dock location, dock length, water depth, and dock widths," said Schnoebelen.

"Our DNR offices continue to receive complaints about docks that are too long, have too many L's, or contain too many boat hoists. A number of complaints also stem from docks that are too wide and cross in front of their neighbor's property. This summer's inventory will take some time, but I think the update of information will help everyone prepare for next season when the new rules take effect."

The last changes in Iowa dock rules occurred approximately 10 years ago, which was also the last time a major inventory was conducted at Clear Lake. Those changes were slight. Next year's changes, however, will be more dramatic and include a complete revamping of the existing dock regulations, said Schnoebelen.

The DNR will seek public comments regarding the new dock proposals during a public meeting July 7 at 6 pm in the community room at Clear Lake City Hall. Rule proposals are listed on the DNR's web site at www.iowadnr.com. Click on 'site map' and look under Natural Resources Commission. Click on minutes for May 12, 2005. The proposals are listed on page 17. Public comment can also be submitted to the web site at the DNR law enforcement link.

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STATE PRESERVES BOARD TO HOLD TELECONFERENCE JUNE 16

DES MOINES - The State Preserves Advisory Board will hold a teleconference meeting at noon June 16 based out of the Wallace State Office Building in Des Moines.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the powers and duties of the board. Assistant attorney general Mike Smith will be on hand to answer questions from board members and staff regarding preserve dedication.

The regular meeting of the State Preserves Advisory Board will be held July 8 at 8:30 a.m. at the Lime Creek Nature Center in Mason City.

Members of the State Preserves Advisory Board are Neil Bernstein, Robin Fortney, Laura Jackson, Scott Moats, Armando Rosales, Cynthia Peterson and Liz Christiansen, deputy director of the DNR.

For more information, contact John Pearson at (515) 281-3891.

###

IOWA FISHING REPORT

For the week of June 14, 2005

www.iowadnr.com

For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.

SOUTHWEST

Viking (Montgomery): Crappie fishing is fair. Crappies are in 6 to 8 feet of water around structure. Use a small jig or minnow and bobber. Bluegill fishing is fair; cast small jigs close to shore. Largemouth bass fishing is also good using plastic baits with a slow retrieve. Channel catfish are being caught using liver and stink bait.

Cold Springs (Cass): Channel catfish are being caught using liver. Crappie fishing is fair around sunken trees. Bluegills are being caught with small jigs around structure.

Manawa (Pottawattamie): Channel catfishing is fair using cut bait and liver at Boy Scout Island. Walleyes are being caught along the west shore in the evening drifting night crawlers and trolling crank baits. Largemouth bass fishing is fair using a slow presentation with spinner baits and plastic worms.

Orient (Adair): Fishing is fair for 7- to 8-inch crappies along the rocks. Channel catfish are being caught using liver early in morning. Most bluegills have moved off spawning areas but are still being caught around structure.

Mormon Trail (Adair): A few crappies are being caught around the jetties and sunken trees. Some bluegills are still being caught off spawning beds on south side of lake. Try fishing in 5 to 6 feet of water around structure. Channel catfishing is excellent using liver.

Greenfield (Adair): Crappie fishing is fair around brush piles using minnows. Bluegill fishing is fair drifting a jig tipped with a night crawler. Largemouth bass fishing is good using spinner baits. Catfishing is fair using liver.

Littlefield (Audubon): Bluegill fishing is fair using small jigs tipped with worms. Crappie fishing has slowed, but some are still being caught using minnows and bobbers. Most crappies are 10 inches.

Prairie Rose (Shelby): Crappies can still be caught along rocky shorelines. Channel catfish are being caught in the evening using dead minnows or liver. Largemouth bass fishing has picked up using crank baits and plastic worms.

DeSoto Bend (Harrison): Walleye fishing is fair jigging minnows around brush piles and trolling crankbaits in evenings in 6- to 8-foot of water. Bluegills, 6 to 6 ½ inches, are being caught on spawning beds. Channel catfish are being caught using liver.

Willow (Harrison): Bluegills are being caught using worms. Crappie fishing is fair using small jigs at the corner of the dam. A few catfish are being caught in shallow coves using liver.

Green Valley (Union): Some crappies can still be caught in the mornings and evenings near structure and deeper during the day. Fishing is good for catfish on liver and blood baits. Some big bluegills can still be caught from shore with crawlers or jigs tipped with wax worms. Fishing is also good for big 12- to 13-inch bullheads on night crawlers.

Three Mile (Union): Walleyes can be caught on leeches and night crawlers off the big points and over the rock piles. Channel catfish are being caught using blood bait or liver from the riprap and rock piles.

Twelve Mile (Union): Channel catfish can be caught on liver or blood baits. Some bluegills and crappies can be caught during mid-day.

Walnut Creek Marsh (Ringgold): Big bluegills and some crappies can be caught along the south dike on crawlers and jigs tipped with crawlers.

Fogle Lake (Ringgold): Channel catfish can be caught using liver in shallow water or the rocks. Some bluegills can be caught near shore using crawlers.

Little River (Decatur): Channel catfish can be caught using liver from rocks. Walleye fishing is good using leeches and crawlers around the big points.

Badger Creek (Madison): Some bluegill and crappie can be caught from the rocks of the jetties and off the rock roadways using crawlers or light jigs.

East Lenox (Taylor): Bluegills can be caught from shore using crawlers.

West Lenox (Taylor): Some nice bluegill can be caught from the corners of the dam off spawning beds. Some good largemouth bass can be caught near shore in the evenings.

West Lake Osceola (Clarke): Bluegills can be caught with crawlers in the bays or around the flooded trees. Largemouth bass fishing is good.

Grade Lake (Clarke): Fishing is good for bluegills on the outside edges of the weed line and for medium-size bass.

Q Pond (Clarke): Some nice bullheads can be caught on crawlers.

Don Williams (Boone): Crappie fishing is good to excellent using minnows and jigs. Channel catfish fishing has been good using stink baits. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair, with a few nice-sized fish. Bluegill fishing has been fair on worms. Several anglers have also reported catching walleyes with a few ranging from 18 to 20 inches.

Hickory Grove (Story): Crappie fishing has been good using jigs and minnows. Bluegill fishing is fair, with worms/bobbers the best combination. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair with top-water lures, with a few fish up to 19 inches.

Rock Creek (Jasper): Bluegill fishing has been fair using worms. Crappie fishing has been fair to good near and around structure using jigs and minnows, although fish are starting to move into deeper water. Largemouth bass have been biting on top-water lures working shorelines. Channel catfish fishing has been fair to good using worms and/or chicken livers.

Big Creek (Polk): Bluegill fishing has been good with worms, with some nice-sized fish reported. Crappie fishing has been slow using jigs/minnows, although fish up to 12 inches have been caught. Anglers also report catching a number of smaller walleye below the 15-inch minimum length limit.

Easter (Polk): Crappie fishing has been good on jigs for 6- to 8-inch fish. Bluegill fishing has been good with some nice 8-inch fish reported. Largemouth bass fishing has been good using plastic worms. Channel catfish fishing has been fair using worms and/or chicken livers.

Saylorville (Polk): Crappie and white bass fishing has been good to excellent at the outlet from Big Creek Lake. Fish have been caught on a variety of lures with reports of nice-sized fish of a variety of species caught. Crappie fishing has been good in shallow-water areas of the reservoir with some 10-inch-plus fish reported.

Below Saylorville Dam (Polk): White bass and crappie fishing has been good using jigs and/or minnows, with some smaller walleye reportedly caught. Fishing has been good along Cottonwood access downstream from the dam.

Des Moines River (Polk): Crappie and white bass fishing has been fair to good in the Des Moines River below Scott Street and Center Street dams.

Lake Red Rock (Marion): Crappie fishing has been fair, with some nice-sized fish caught using jig/minnow combinations. The better areas are the shallower, warmer waters, around the outlet from Roberts Creek and in the Whitebreast area. Channel catfish fishing has been good in the upper reaches of the reservoir off old road beds.

Below Lake Red Rock (Marion): Anglers report white bass and crappie fishing has been fair using jigs in the tailwater area. Channel catfish fishing has also picked up with some nice fish being caught.

Roberts Creek (Marion): Crappie fishing has been good near the outlet using jig/minnow combinations. Channel catfish fishing has been good near the outlet.

Ahquabi (Warren): Crappie fishing has been fair using jigs/minnows. Largemouth bass fishing has been good using plastic worms and spinners, although most have been sub-legal in size. Bluegill and redear fishing has been good with most fish taken on worms near the shoreline.

Hooper (Warren): Crappie fishing has been fair using jig/minnow combinations. Largemouth bass fishing has been good using plastic worms and spinner lures. Bluegill fishing has been fair to good.

For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

SOUTHEAST

Mississippi River (Pools 16 – 19): Fishing on the Mississippi River Pools 16-19 has been fair. At the gauging station on Pool 16 (near Muscatine) the water temperature is 70 degrees and the river pool stage is 11.32 ft. and is expected to remain stable over the next several days.

Fishing for channel catfish continues to be good throughout the river on dip baits, crawlers, leeches and shad guts. Bluegill fishing continues to be good in all accessible backwaters on worms and small jigs and bobber rigs. Bluegills have been caught in Big Timber and Lake Odessa on Pool 17. Crappie fishing has slowed, however anglers still report catching a few crappie. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair. White bass fishing continues to be fair in the tailwaters. Fishing for walleye and sauger has been slow, but a few fish are being caught in the tailwaters of Dam 15 and near Credit Island.

Lake Odessa (Louisa): Catfishing has picked up with lots of nice fish being taken. Cut bait and shad guts are working well as bait.

Lake Darling (Washington): Anglers are catching some nice catfish in the evenings on chicken liver and night crawlers. Start working the riprap as the catfish are starting to look for areas to nest. The bluegills are still in shallow, although they have moved off the nests. They might be a little harder to find.

Lake Geode (Henry): Bluegill fishing remains good although the fish have moved off the nests and into deeper water. Work the edges of the deeper weed beds with a jig and wax worm for some nice fish.

Lake Belva Deer (Keokuk) Bluegill fishing continues to be excellent. Work the deeper water in the trees. Remember with clear water, silence is golden and will lead to a lot more fish. Fish small jigs tipped with wax worms or pieces of worm.

Lake Rathbun (Appanoose): Crappies continue to bite on minnows and tube jigs along the rocky shorelines and also out in deeper water around brush piles. Channel catfish have been biting on cut bait and stinkbait around the Bridgeview area. White bass have been hitting on minnows and night crawlers in shallow water and also out along the flats.

Lake Hawthorn (Mahaska): Channel catfish have been hitting on cut bait. Bluegills and crappies are hitting on small jigs. The panfish have moved out into deeper water around submerged structure.

Lake Sugema (Van Buren): Bluegills have been hitting on small jigs in the shallows. Crappies have moved out into deeper water. Largemouth bass have been hitting on a variety of artificial lures. Top-water lures in the mornings and evenings have been productive.

Lake Wapello (Davis): Largemouth bass have been hitting on top-water lures fished in the mornings and evenings. Other artificial lures have also been productive in areas around submerged structure. Bluegills have been hitting on small jigs in the shallows. Channel catfish have been biting on night crawlers and stinkbait.

Pleasant Creek (Linn): Channel catfish are moving shallow to spawn and are very aggressive. They can be caught on a variety of baits. Large numbers of bluegills in the 5- to 8-inch range are in the shallows and are usually eager to bite. Largemouth bass have been biting on both live and artificial baits around the rocky areas of the lake.

Hannen Lake (Benton): Bluegills in the 6- to 9-inch range are being caught in the shallows. Channel catfish are coming in to spawn and are being taken by anglers on chicken livers and crawlers. Largemouth bass are being caught on a variety of artificial and live baits as well.

Coralville Reservoir (Johnson): The channel catfish are in the shallow rocks to spawn. They can be caught on a variety of live and dead baits.

Lake Iowa (Iowa): Spawning channel catfish are feeding aggressively on livers and crawlers. Look for them in the shallow areas of the lake.

Diamond Lake (Poweshiek): Bluegills spawning in the shallows are being caught on small baits, while spawning catfish are being caught on crawlers in the shallow rocky areas of the lake.

Union Grove (Tama): Crappies, bluegills and channel catfish are all being caught in the shallows right now. Try minnows or small jigs for the crappies, small worms or waxies for the 'gills, and crawlers or liver for the catfish.

Kent Park (Johnson): Bluegills and crappies are being caught in the shallows on small baits, while channel catfish are being caught early and late in the day on chicken livers or crawlers. Many sublegal bass can be caught on a variety of lures as well.

Iowa River (Louisa): Catfishing has been good. River levels are remaining stable despite the recent rains.

Skunk River (Keokuk and Washington): River remains high, as the North Skunk seems to be providing quite a bit of water yet. Catfishing hasn't been bad but stable water levels would improve it.

For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.

NORTHEAST

Mississippi River – Water level at Lansing is 9.61 feet and stable. Water level in the tailwaters at Guttenberg is stable at 8.93 feet and temperature is 79F. Fishing over the past week slowed due to rising river conditions, but some fish were still being caught. A few walleye are being caught in Black Hawk Park (**Pool 9**), near Lynxville (**Pool 10**) and in the ends of the sloughs around Prairie du Chien (**Pool 10**). Try trolling crank baits, willow cats (madtoms) or a leech along the wing dams and sloughs. Some walleye are being taken on crank baits or three-ways tipped with a leech or crawler fished along the sand flats leading to deeper water. Also, fish the shallow areas with live baits just before dark with jigs or crank baits in 1 to 4 feet of water for walleye. Walleye fishing is fair along the wing dams in **Pools 11-14** using crank baits or three-ways tipped with a night crawler or leech. Bluegill fishing slowed due to rising river conditions, but some are being taken around snags or brush in 6 feet of water with a slight current and in tailwater areas just outside of the main current in shallow water in **Pools 9-11**. In **Pool 10**, fish for bluegills along the weed lines and up the spillway near Harpers Ferry using a piece of crawler fished near the bottom in 1 to 5 feet of water. Also in **Pool 10**, bluegills are hitting worms fished in the Sny Magill area, Norwegian and Methodist lakes. Other good bluegill waters include the backwater areas in **Pool 10** and the tailwater of **Lock 10**. Bluegill fishing was slow in **Pools 12-15**. A few crappies are being caught in **Pools 9-11** in deeper water with little or no current. Look for woody debris and suspend a night crawler, minnow or jig under a bobber in 1 to 7 feet of water. Crappie numbers and size are excellent this year in **Pools 9** and **10**, with many large fish observed by DNR personnel during spring netting. Better crappie fishing can be found using minnows fished in **Pool 10** near the spillway by Harpers Ferry, the Sny Magill area, Norwegian and Methodist lakes. Fishing for freshwater drum has been excellent using night crawlers or jigs and minnows fished in the tailwater areas, sand flats off the main channel or the wing dams in **Pools 9-11**, and off the wing dams and the main channel in **Pools 12-15**. White bass (striper) fishing is picking up in the **Pools 9-12** tailwater areas, with fish being taken on jigs and spinners fished in the current. Excellent white bass fishing has been reported off the sand flats and wing dams near Harpers Ferry in **Pool 10** using small white or silver spinners thrown into the current for quick action with these scrappy fish. Small shad rap crank baits can also be effective with white bass. Look for places where baitfish are schooled together and white bass can often be seen hitting the surface, chasing schools of minnows around. Fishing is improving for catfish in the tailwaters and along the main channel border of **Dam 10** and off the rocks in **Pools 12-15**. Stink baits have worked the best, but catfish are also being caught on night crawlers and

chicken liver fished in the main channel border or tailwater areas of **Pools 9-11**. Also try fishing the logjams in **Pools 12-15** for hungry cats using leeches and crawlers floated under a bobber. Largemouth bass fishing is fair but improving in **Pools 9-15** on a variety of traditional bass lures including soft plastics, crank baits, spinner baits, top-water lures and jig-and-pigs fished around woody structure, vegetation and rocky shorelines in the backwaters and along the main channel border in areas with little or no current. Try fishing for smallmouth bass along rocky shorelines in **Pools 9-12** that have some current flowing by. Smallies are being taken on black twister jigs and a variety of crank baits. Northern pike can be found in the backwater areas in **Pools 9-11** using spoons, spinner baits and shallow-running crank baits. Look for areas with some vegetation and, as water temperatures increase throughout the summer, expect these fish to congregate near the mouths of coldwater tributary streams or springs that flow into the Mississippi.

Cedar River (Mitchell); **Turkey** and **Upper Iowa Rivers** (Winneshie): Recent rains have muddied these rivers and fishing has slowed. However, some anglers are still catching trout near the coldwater outlets using various baits.

Cedar River (Black Hawk), **Shell Rock River** (Butler) and **West Fork Cedar River** (Butler): Channel catfish fishing is good to excellent drifting a minnow, night crawler or leech below a bobber. On the Cedar River, look for channel catfish below the dams.

Maquoketa River (Delaware and Jones): Fishing for channel catfish is good to excellent using minnows and night crawlers. Smallmouth bass are biting on crank baits in the catch-and-release area below the Lake Delhi dam.

Shell Rock River (Floyd): Smallmouth bass fishing is good with jigs tipped with a crawler.

Casey Lake (Tama) is good for bluegills on small jigs or a piece of worm fished under a bobber in the shallows. Fishing for channel catfish is good to excellent during the evening hours.

Lake Meyer (Winneshie): Bluegill fishing is excellent on a piece of night crawler fished under a bobber. Crappie fishing is good.

Lake Hendricks (Howard): Bluegill fishing is good on worms fished under a bobber. Largemouth bass are hitting a wide variety of baits including top-water lures and spinner baits.

Lake Delhi (Delaware): Fishing for channel catfish is good to excellent. Largemouth bass fishing is good using crank baits or rubber worms. Bluegill fishing is good on a piece of worm fished under a bobber.

Silver Lake (Delaware): Bluegills are on the beds and fish are biting on a piece of worm or jig floated under a bobber.

Volga Lake (Fayette): Anglers are catching big bluegills using wax worms and other live baits.

Sny Magill Creek, near Garnaville in Clayton County, offers miles of quality trout stream for anglers. Sny Magill is stocked twice per week with catchable-size rainbow and brook trout. The stream also has a significant population of catchable brown trout that were stocked as fingerlings and allowed to grow up on the stream. While there, check out the new stream habitat work that was recently completed and the new angler access trail which begins in the parking lot near the kiosk. Sny Magill is well marked with signs to identify the area, or anglers can consult the *Iowa Trout Fishing Guide* for exact directions to the stream or go to www.iowadnr.com and download a map to the

area. Near the upper end of the stream there is a kiosk with a map showing the boundary of the entire public area and the stream section open to angling. Students from MFL-MAR-MAC High School completed a community service project by cleaning the Sny Magill area of trash earlier this spring.

Yellow River (Allamakee): For a great trout fishing canoe trip, the Yellow River offers the perfect opportunity. Not only will you experience spectacular scenery, but fishing for brown trout can also be spectacular with many 20-inch-plus trout caught each year. The best section is from the Highway 51 bridge to the Ion bridge on County Road X36. Consult the *Iowa Trout Fishing Guide* for directions to the stream.

Trout - Trout fishing is excellent and stream conditions are good to excellent. For current trout stocking information, contact the Iowa DNR at 563-927-5736 or go on-line at www.iowadnr.com and check the fisheries web pages to view the 2005 stocking calendar.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.

NORTHWEST

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing has been good at Angler's Bay. Also, the south weedline and the north end in front of the footbridge have been good during the day using crawlers and leeches. The night bite has been good on the west side and along the reeds trolling shad raps in 10 to 14 feet of water. Largemouth bass fishing has been fair in thick vegetation around the lake using jigs and top-water baits. Muskie fishing has been fair in Angler's Bay and around the south end of the lake.

West Lake Okoboji (Dickinson): Bluegill fishing is excellent over the spawning beds using black jigs tipped with a waxworm or small garden worm. Largemouth bass fishing is good around docks using plastic baits.

Center Lake (Dickinson): Bluegills fishing is fair; look for spawning areas of sand. Most fish are being caught using a small worm. Crappies are also being caught on small jigs and worms. Catfish are being caught on cut bait.

East Hottes Lake (Dickinson): Anglers are catching crappies using small minnows around the outflow. Bluegill fishing is fair on small jigs tipped with waxworms.

Silver Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing is good trolling planer boards and drifting with crawlers. Fish range from 12 to 22 inches.

Tuttle Lake (Emmet): Walleye fishing has been fair with nice-sized fish being caught around the outflow; 17- to 21-inch fish are being taken.

Trumbull Lake (Clay): Yellow perch fishing has been good from shore using small minnows.

Silver Lake (Clay): Crappie fishing has been fair.

Lost Island (Clay/Palo Alto): Anglers have had success fishing from shore for bullheads.

Willow Creek (Osceola): Bass fishing with top-water baits has been good. Bluegill fishing off the docks and around brush has been fair.

Winterfield Pits (Sioux): Bass fishing has been fair around submerged brush, throwing diving crank baits and Carolina-rigged plastic baits.

Storm Lake (Buena Vista): Fishing for channel catfish has been excellent on a variety of baits. Lots of fish in the 2- to 5-pound range have been caught. Walleye

fishing has been good trolling number five shad raps. White bass fishing has been good on twisters or spinners from shore or trolling crank baits.

Black Hawk Lake (Sac): Catfishing has been very good on a variety of baits. Bullhead fishing has been excellent all over the lake on night crawlers; most fish are 7 ½ to 8 inches. Walleye fishing has been good using leeches. Lots of fish are under the 15-inch limit, but limits of legal fish have also been taken.

Arrowhead Lake (Sac): Bluegill fishing has been good in shallow water. Small black leadheads or small hooks tipped with a piece of night crawler under a small bobber have been working best.

Crawford Creek (Ida): Fishing has been good for nice-sized bluegill.

North Twin Lake (Calhoun): Walleye fishing is fair to good trolling crankbaits. Yellow bass fishing is fair to good along the shoreline. Monster bullheads are also being caught.

Brushy Creek (Webster): Bluegill fishing is good. Fish close to shore using wax worms or a piece of worm. A few walleyes have been picked up throughout the day on leeches and night crawlers. Many anglers are catching bass throughout the lake.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Walleye fishing has been slow. Trolling crank baits and jigs and minnows fished around the rock reefs are producing some fish. Channel catfish are hitting on crawlers, minnows and chicken livers. Bullheads are hitting on crawlers fished on the bottom.

Beeds Lake (Franklin): Bluegill fishing is good on small jigs or pieces of crawlers. Fish are on beds near the shore.

Interstate Park Pond (Franklin): Crappies are hitting on small jigs and minnows off the jetty. Bluegills are biting on small jigs and crawlers around the shoreline.

Smith Lake (Kossuth): Bluegill fishing is good, although sorting is required for the quality-sized fish. Use small pieces of crawlers or small jigs for the best results.

Silver Lake (Worth County): Bullhead fishing is excellent on night crawlers fished on the bottom.

Rice Lake (Winnebago): Bullhead fishing is excellent. Quality-sized fish are available in good numbers. Fishing crawlers on the bottom provides the best action.

Lower Pine (Hardin): Largemouth bass fishing is good. Work the downed trees with jigs or spinner baits.

Lake Cornelia (Wright): Bullhead fishing is good off the jetty or any wind blown shoreline. Use crawlers fished on the bottom. Walleye fishing is fair trolling crankbaits.

For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.

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